

# Ad-Hoc Transportation Sub-Committee Pro's and Con's of seat belts

The Ad-Hoc Transportation Sub-Committee of the Lake Superior Board of Education held a general information night last Tuesday in the gymnasium of the Terrace Bay Public School. The session was designed to present visual presentations and representatives from various resources to discuss the implementation of seat belts in school buses, as previously suggested by the Inquest recommendations last December.

Members of the Sub-Committee on hand for the session included Judie Cooper, Joan Ber-

tin, (public at large); Laurie Stachiw (student); John Redins (student); Paul Cebraio, Joan Nugent and Don Burton (Trustees); and Getry Armour, sub-committee Chairman. Guests of the panel of representatives were Ian Rogerson, representing the Etobicoke Board of Education; Al Campbell, Liaison for the Ministry of Education; Dr. Keith Wilkes for the medical profession; Horst Wetzl from the Sault Ste. Marie Board of Education and Wilf Blais, District Manager of the Ministry of Transportation and Communica-

tions. Approximately 55 people were in attendance at this session to listen to the pros and cons of seat belt use in the school buses.

Wilf Blais of the M.T.C. listed his responsibilities as District Manager which included driver examinations, vehicle inspectors, highway carrier officers and vehicle licensing issuing. He went on to state that over 600,000 children are currently being bused to school each day in Ontario and that several thousand injuries are received by children in school bus related accidents every

year.

"Because of the recent restrictions put on school bus drivers, bus equipment and the school buses themselves, we have now a better standard set, than years previous." He went on to say that the safety record for school bus drivers is excellent.

Al Campbell from the Ministry of Education stated that under the Education Act, it says that the Board MAY provide transportation for the students. All the Ministry does, is to provide assistance to the Boards through publish-



Ian Rogerson from the Etobicoke Board of Education answered questions pertaining to seat belts on school buses, as their Board was the first and only school board to enforce this policy in Ontario.

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# News

## Girl Guide 'Roll-Up'



Last Monday, 13 girls from Terrace Bay 'rolled-up' from Tenderfoot to Guides. The girls were given a special ceremony where pins and badges were awarded to them. Pictured above are the girls who 'rolled-up'.

[l.-r. Back Row] Annette Clarke, Bonnie Brake,

Renee Kaizer, France Bilodeau, Sian MacKay and Sherri Daniels.

[Front Row] Bonnie Simpson, Kim Renette, Kerry Robinson, Erica Phytilla, Melanie Levesque, Kelly Wilson and Debbie McDougal. Congratulations girls!

## Attention cottage owners!

Cottage owners on Wabikoba Lake may now purchase the property from their front property line to the lake, according to Mr. Paul Strassburger of the Terrace Bay office of the Ministry of Natural Resources. However there are certain stipulations.

(1) There must be a signed statement with a request to purchase, giving the name of the owner and the lot number from each prospective purchaser. If a cottage owner does not wish to purchase his

frontage property, he also is asked to indicate this, along with his name and lot number in writing.

(2) The property must be surveyed by a registered Ontario Land Surveyor, whose name shall first be submitted to the Ministry. The cost of the survey shall be borne by each property owner. "Feelers" indicate the approximate cost of each survey will be in the area of \$375.00 per lot, and it appears preferable to have the lots surveyed in groups of four or five. The cost of

the property itself, to be purchased from the Ministry, will be in the area of \$250.00 per lot.

Gerry Waghorn has agreed to accept written applications from the cottage owners, and will then attempt to arrange for a survey to be done early in the spring. ALL cottage owners are asked to send either their application to purchase or their statement that they do not wish to purchase to:

Mr. G.T. Waghorn,  
Box 340,  
Marathon, Ontario

POT 2E0.

All replies should be submitted before March 31, 1984. Should there not be sufficient response, the matter will not be pursued any further. If anyone knows the name and address of any cottage or property owners who do not live in Terrace Bay, Manitowadge or Marathon, it would be appreciated if you would indicate this in your letter, so they too can be contacted to determine their wishes.

ed manuals on school bus transportation and also by payment of grants to the local boards for some of the costs incurred by school bus transportation.

Horst Wetzl from the Sault Ste. Marie Board of Ed was on hand to answer any questions that concerned parents may have had in regards to the Soo's bus transportation policy. He stated that their Board has never seen a need to look into the issue of seat belts in their buses and hoped that they would not have to do so unless the government made this type of legislation effective.

Ian Rogerson from the Etobicoke Board was present to discuss the implementation of seat belts in school buses; as the Etobicoke Board was the first and only Board to enforce the use of seat belts in their school buses. This they did back in 1975 through recommendations made to them by various committees, boards and parent groups. "The question of the pros and cons of seat belts will be an issue as long as there are school buses transporting our children to school on an everyday basis," he said. He made reference to the October 1982 school bus accident which claimed the life of a local high school girl and said this, "Had that bus rolled down the embankment into the lake, how likely were their chances of survival, if they had been wearing seat belts? What were their chances of extricating themselves from the bus? There are as many pros as there are cons, and both must be presented in order to come up with a sound and responsible recommendation to your local Board."

Dr. Keith Wilkes felt that had the student been wearing a seat belt, she may have been alive today. Speaking as the doctor who treated the victims of the bus accident and also as a member of the Inquest panel, he related to the

audience that he felt seat belts should be mandatory in school buses. "Injuries caused by seat belts as a result of an accident, aren't the issue here. If they save a life, this is what we should be looking at," he replied.

One member of the audience felt that seat belts should be enforced by the government as they are in all other passenger vehicles. If everyone from newborn to the elderly are required to wear seat belt restraints at all times, then why hasn't the government made the same legislation in regards to passengers of school buses. School bus drivers are required by law to wear seat belts so why not the children?

Other questions presented to the guests were:

(1) If seat belts were enforced and made mandatory, who would be responsible for ensuring that each and every student was wearing them. The answer to this was that the driver of the bus was there to safely transport the children, not to check and double check that the children are buckled up. This would have to come from parental reinforcement.

(2) What vandalism would occur with seat belts (e.g. using them to hit other students, etc.) and also what upkeep would be done to maintain the proper working order of the mechanisms on the restraints? The answer to this question was given by Ian Rogerson who stated that since 1975, only one student has mistreated his seat belt - that no vandalism has occurred to the belts and that to date approximately 2 hours per week is spent on ensuring that the retractable belts are cleaned, oiled and maintained in proper working order.

Other questions presented included the requirements of the M.T.C. regarding the licensing of school bus

drivers, the frequency of medical examinations, defensive driving courses and the years between the re-testing of the drivers. All of these issues were answered accordingly by Wilf Blais of the M.T.C.

In a film entitled "Broken Bus" which showed a study conducted by UCLA on school bus safety as well as accident impact studies, the following recommendations were made:

(1) School bus interior criteria must be standardized.

(2) That safety regulations must be uniform at all school buses.

(3) That there are no standees or improvised seating on school buses.

(4) That all seats be designed for maximum safety (e.g. sufficient padding, height of seats), and

(5) That all bumpers of all passenger vehicles, trucks and buses be standardized in order to prevent over-riding and under-riding of other vehicles.

Basically what the film concluded, was that the problems in regards to bus safety have been identified. It is now up to the individuals, the parents, and the local school boards to tell the government and the school bus manufacturers what they want to see and done in terms of bus safety.

The Sub-Committee will take all of this information along with presentations made to them through groups and individuals and compile a report to submit to the Lake Superior Board along with their recommendations on the seat belt issue.

On Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. a Presentation Night will be conducted with the sole purpose being to allow the opportunity for individuals or groups to make written or oral presentations to the Sub-Committee. If you are concerned over the issue of seat belts, then please plan to attend this session.

### INSIDE THIS WEEK...

"Hemlo Gold" to be televised

-Local historian writes on "Isbester's Landing"

-Rosspport engages in fire prevention